

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for processing a purchase transaction between an account holder and a merchant, the method comprising:

automatically requesting an automated clearing house transfer from a source account owned by the account holder to a destination account owned by the account holder via an automated clearing house network;

receiving the automated clearing house transfer;

adjusting destination account data associated with the destination account by increasing a balance of the destination account by an amount of the transfer;

receiving transaction data from ~~a~~ the merchant indicating an attempted purchase transaction, the transaction data including a transaction amount and data identifying the destination account;

processing the attempted purchase transaction with a credit card interchange rate; and

transmitting data to the merchant indicating one of authorization of the attempted purchase transaction and denial of the attempted transaction.

2. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein
automatically requesting the automated clearing house transfer includes
automatically requesting the automated clearing house transfer at a predetermined time
for a predetermined amount of money.

3. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 2, wherein
the predetermined time is on a recurring basis.

4. (Currently Amended) The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein
automatically requesting the automated clearing house transfer includes
automatically requesting the automated clearing house transfer on a transactional basis or
on request by one of ~~an associated~~ the account holder and an associated financial institution.

5. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 3, wherein the recurring basis occurs one of daily, weekly, monthly and yearly.

6. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the source account is one of a checking account, a savings account and a money market account.

7. (Currently Amended) The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the destination account is ~~one of a checking account, a savings account and a money market~~ credit card account.

8. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the source account and the destination account are managed by the same financial institution.

9. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 6, wherein the financial institution is one of a bank and a credit card company.

10. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein receiving the transaction data from the merchant includes receiving the data from the merchant via a proprietary credit network, the proprietary credit network being associated with one of VISA®, MasterCard®, Plus, Novus, Diner's Club® and American Express®.

11. (Currently Amended) The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein processing the attempted purchase transaction with the credit card interchange rate includes
accessing the balance of the destination account to determine whether the balance is greater than or equal to the transaction amount,

if it is determined that the balance is greater than or equal to the transaction amount authorizing the attempted purchase transaction, and

if it is determined that the balance is not greater than or equal to the transaction amount, denying the attempted purchase transaction.

12. (Currently Amended) The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein processing the attempted purchase transaction with the credit card interchange rate includes

accessing the balance of the destination account to determine whether the balance is greater than or equal to the transaction amount,

if it is determined that the balance is greater than or equal to the transaction amount authorizing the attempted purchase transaction,

and if it is determined that the balance is not greater than or equal to the transaction amount, one of reprocessing the attempted transaction and accessing a line of credit associated with at least one of the source account and the destination account for funding the attempted purchase transaction or at least a portion of the attempted transaction.

13. (Currently Amended) The method as set forth in claim 12, wherein ~~an the account holder associated with the source account and the destination account is~~ presented with an option of reprocessing the attempted transaction or accessing the line of credit associated with the at least one of the source account and the destination account.

14. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the credit card interchange rate is a percentage of the transaction amount.

15. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 1, further comprising: providing interest at one of a fixed interest rate and a variable interest rate on at least a portion of the balance of the destination account, the interest accruing after expiration of a predetermined period of time.

16. (Currently Amended) The method as set forth in claim 1, further comprising:

providing a reward to ~~an~~ the account holder ~~associated with the source account and the destination account~~, if the attempted purchase transaction was authorized.

17. (Currently Amended) The method as set forth in claim 16, wherein providing the reward includes assigning at least one reward unit to another account associated with the destination account, the at least one reward unit being determined according to the transaction amount of the attempted purchase transaction.

18. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 17, wherein the at least one reward unit includes one of at least one point and at least one mile.

19. (Currently Amended) The method as set forth in claim 16, wherein the reward includes one of a discount on the transaction amount of the attempted purchase transaction, a gift certificate, a coupon, a good and a service.

20. (Currently Amended) A method for processing a purchase transaction between an account holder and a merchant, the method comprising:

receiving an automated clearing house transfer from a source account owned by the account holder via an automated clearing house network;

adjusting destination account data associated with a destination account owned by the account holder by increasing a balance of the destination account by an amount of the transfer;

receiving transaction data from ~~a~~ the merchant indicating an attempted purchase transaction, the transaction data including a transaction amount and data identifying the destination account;

processing the attempted purchase transaction with a credit card interchange rate; and transmitting data to the merchant indicating one of authorization of the attempted purchase transaction and denial of the attempted purchase transaction.

21. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 20, wherein receiving the automated clearing house transfer includes

receiving the automated clearing house transfer at a predetermined time for a predetermined amount of money.

22. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 21, wherein the predetermined time is on a recurring basis.

23. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 22, wherein the recurring basis occurs one of daily, weekly, monthly and yearly.

24. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 20, wherein the source account is one of a checking account, a savings account and a money market account.

25. (Currently Amended) The method as set forth in claim 20, wherein the destination account is ~~one of a checking account, a savings account and a money market~~ credit card account.

26. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 20, wherein the source account and the destination account are managed by the same financial institution.

27. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 26, wherein the financial institution is one of a bank and a credit card company.

28. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 20, wherein receiving the transaction data from the merchant includes receiving the data from the merchant via a proprietary credit network, the proprietary credit network being associated with one of VISA®, MasterCard®, Plus, Novus, Diner's Club® and American Express®.

29. (Currently Amended) The method as set forth in claim 20, wherein

processing the attempted purchase transaction with the credit card interchange rate includes

accessing the balance of the destination account to determine whether the balance is greater than or equal to the transaction amount,

if it is determined that the balance is greater than or equal to the transaction amount authorizing the attempted purchase transaction, and

if it is determined that the balance is not greater than or equal to the transaction amount, denying the attempted purchase transaction.

30. (Currently Amended) The method as set forth in claim 20, wherein processing the attempted purchase transaction with the credit card interchange rate includes

accessing the balance of the destination account to determine whether the balance is greater than or equal to the transaction amount,

if it is determined that the balance is greater than or equal to the transaction amount authorizing the attempted purchase transaction,

and if it is determined that the balance is not greater than or equal to the transaction amount, one of reprocessing the attempted transaction and accessing a line of credit associated with at least one of the source account and the destination account for funding the attempted purchase transaction or at least a portion of the attempted purchase transaction.

31. (Currently Amended) The method as set forth in claim 30, wherein ~~an the account holder associated with the source account and the destination account is~~ presented with an option of reprocessing the attempted purchase transaction or accessing the line of credit associated with the at least one of the source account and the destination account.

32. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 20, wherein the credit card interchange rate is a percentage of the transaction amount.

33. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 20, further comprising:

providing interest at one of a fixed interest rate and a variable interest rate on at least a portion of the balance of the destination account, the interest accruing after expiration of a predetermined period of time.

34. (Currently Amended) The method as set forth in claim 20, further comprising:
providing a reward to ~~an the~~ account holder ~~associated with the source account and the destination account~~, if the attempted purchase transaction was authorized.

35. (Currently Amended) The method as set forth in claim 34, wherein
providing the reward includes
assigning at least one reward unit to another account associated with the destination account, the at least one reward unit being determined according to the transaction amount of the attempted purchase transaction.

36. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 35, wherein
the at least one reward unit includes one of at least one point and at least one mile.

37. (Currently Amended) The method as set forth in claim 34, wherein
the reward includes one of a discount on the transaction amount of the attempted purchase transaction, a gift certificate, a coupon, a good and a service.

38. (Currently Amended) A method for processing a purchase transaction between an account holder and a merchant, the method comprising:
receiving transaction data from ~~a the~~ merchant indicating an attempted purchase transaction, the transaction data including a transaction amount and data identifying the destination account owned by the account holder;
processing the attempted purchase transaction with a credit card interchange rate;
requesting an automated clearing house transfer for the transaction amount to be transmitted from a source account owned by the account holder to ~~a the~~ destination account via an automated clearing house network;
receiving the automated clearing house transfer; and

transmitting data to the merchant indicating one of authorization of the attempted purchase transaction and denial of the attempted purchase transaction.

39. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 38, further comprising:
adjusting destination account data associated with the destination account by increasing a balance of the destination account by an amount of the automated clearing house transfer upon receiving the automated clearing house transfer; and
readjusting the destination account data by decreasing the balance of the destination account one of before and after transmitting the authorization data to the merchant.

40. (Currently Amended) A system for processing a purchase transaction between an account holder and a merchant, the system comprising:

a memory unit for storing destination account data including data indicating a balance of a destination account and data identifying the destination account, the destination account being owned by the account holder; and

a processing unit operatively connected to the memory unit, the processing unit programmed to

automatically request an automated clearing house transfer from a source account owned by the account holder to the destination account via an automated clearing house network,

receive the automated clearing house transfer,

adjust the destination account data associated with the destination account by increasing the balance of the destination account by an amount of the transfer,

receive transaction data from a merchant indicating an attempted purchase transaction, the transaction data including a transaction amount and the data identifying the destination account,

process the attempted purchase transaction with a credit card interchange rate, and

transmit data to the merchant indicating one of authorization of the attempted purchase transaction and denial of the attempted purchase transaction.

41. (Currently Amended) A system for processing a purchase transaction between an account holder and a merchant, the system comprising:

a memory unit for storing destination account data including data indicating a balance of a destination account and data identifying the destination account, the destination account being owned by the account holder; and

a processing unit operatively connected to the memory unit, the processing unit programmed to

receive an automated clearing house transfer from a source account owned by the account holder via an automated clearing house network,

adjust the destination account data associated with the destination account by increasing the balance of the destination account by an amount of the transfer,

receiving transaction data from a merchant indicating an attempted purchase transaction, the transaction data including a transaction amount and the data identifying the destination account,

processing the attempted purchase transaction with a credit card interchange rate, and

transmitting data to the merchant indicating one of authorization of the attempted purchase transaction and denial of the attempted purchase transaction.

42. (Currently Amended) A system for processing a purchase transaction between an account holder and a merchant, the system comprising:

a memory unit for storing destination account data including data indicating a balance of a destination account and data identifying the destination account, the destination account being owned by the account holder; and

a processing unit operatively connected to the memory unit, the processing unit programmed to

receive an automated clearing house transfer from a source account owned by the account holder via an automated clearing house network,

adjust the destination account data associated with the destination account by increasing the balance of the destination account by an amount of the transfer;

receive transaction data from a merchant indicating an attempted purchase transaction, the transaction data including a transaction amount and the data identifying the destination account,

processing the attempted purchase transaction with a credit card interchange rate, and

transmitting data to the merchant indicating one of authorization of the attempted
purchase transaction and denial of the attempted purchase transaction.